

STAIRCASES—A CAUTION.—It is now ten weeks since a friend, when lighting me down the staircase of his house, incautiously ran forward to place the light upon a slab in the passage, leaving me in the shade. I proceeded with my hand upon the rail, and when I reached the newel, naturally concluded that I had but one step more to descend. It was not so: there was one additional tread beyond the newel. Unprepared for this, in stepping forward I strained all the back muscles of my leg so severely as not to have been able to quit my house since, and have the probable prospect of remaining within doors several weeks more. A subsequent injury has, I am informed, occurred at the same place, but providentially the sufferer was confined only four days. In the course of this week, the surgeon who attends me was at a house, and the lady, anxious to see that he was in comfort, proceeded down stairs with a light. It was extinguished by a gust, and the newel of the rail being one step short of the actual termination of the stairs, she fell, and her arm was broken. May I ask you to warn architects and builders against the extreme danger attendant upon such a very common practice? I cannot yet be assured that I have not been rendered lame for the remainder of my life; and as, in the third instance, the sufferer is an elderly woman, it may terminate her existence.—R. K.

LAMBETH PARISH CHURCH.—At a vestry meeting, on Tuesday, Mr. Churchwarden Taylor drew attention to the subject of the repair and restoration of the church, by voluntary subscriptions. It was proposed to case the building with stone, similar to the tower, to make a new roof of lighter construction, and with a view to better ventilation, and, in fact, to restore the church to its original state. Under the proposed plan, upwards of 200 more sittings would be appropriated to the poorer classes. He was happy to say that many Dissenters had already liberally contributed. The gross estimate was 6,574l. He moved that the plans and specifications of Mr. P. C. Hardwick be sanctioned and approved. Mr. Taylor stated that there was no power to make a church-rate. Mr. Bushell moved an amendment. Mr. Taylor said the churchwardens had already received, from the rector, 100l.; Archbishop of Canterbury, 100l.; London and Westminster Bank, 100 guineas. The original resolution was carried by a majority of 42 to 1.

THE MARBLE ARCH.—Will you permit me to inquire of you, whether, among the many suggestions which have been offered as to the site of the Marble Arch lately taken from St. James's-park, the situation at the entrance to the Avenue in the Regent's-park has been named? This ornamental walk is now growing into importance and beauty: its length and public accommodation merit a suitable entrance, and although I do not greatly admire the structure I refer to, it is adapted, as to its magnitude, to the place which I have mentioned, where there is nothing to obstruct its being well viewed, and the trees and verdure near it will act as reliefs to the eye in contrast with its colour.—JOHN WHITE, D.S., St. Marylebone.

* Such a suggestion has been made in our pages.

MACADAM IN PARIS.—"The mud produced on the macadamised part of the Boulevards is (says the *Moniteur du Soir*) to be turned to account. A person, named Tahoureau, has obtained permission to carry it away for the purpose, after having had it carefully washed and sifted, of having the silicious particles made into bricks to clean knives with. A hectolitre of the mud produces ten bricks, which are sold at 20c. each, and so give 2f. for each hectolitre. It is said that a good workman can earn 20f. a day by this new kind of industry."

SOMETHING TO BE BUILT AT PINNER.—The sum of 45,000l. in money and land has been assigned by Miss Howard, of York-place, for the following uses:—To erect twenty-one houses on her property at Pinner, near Harrow, in the form of a crescent; the centre house for the trustees; the other twenty houses for the sole use of twenty widows, who are to occupy them free of rent, and to receive also 50l. a-year, or more if the fund will allow. The trustees appointed are the Earl of Fingill, and Mr. W. A. Mackinnon, M.P.

CLAY FOR INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES.—Your allusion to clays for pottery manufacture in an article in your journal, entitled, "The International Exhibition," reminds me of some specimens of that material which I have seen in the neighbourhood of Billericay, in Essex, and to which I would call the attention of your readers living in, or acquainted with, that locality. The clay is of the pale yellow tint, and of exceedingly fine texture, and would, I think, with an admixture of silica, or pulverised flint, produce very good earthenware of the commoner sort. In its pure state it is not fit for exposure to the weather, though it is susceptible of a polish, as may be seen in some of the dressings and fence-wall-cappings of the Billericay Union Workhouse. The red clay of Essex is also of very fine quality, and many windows of the sixteenth century have their tracery executed in it. A specimen was exhibited at the Architectural Exhibition this year.—W. S.

HARMLESS PAINTS.—Amongst the recent American patents is one by Messrs. Leclair and Barruel, the object of which is set forth to be a complete reform in the art of painting, by substituting unalterable and harmless paints for those having lead and copper, which are poisonous substances, for a basis, and which are liable to speedy alteration, and never produce perfectly clear tints. This reform is effected by the discovery of methods of obtaining on a large scale the white and yellow of zinc and barytes, zinc green, and antimonial red, which products, used as such, or combined with other harmless and unalterable colours employed in painting, form a complete scale of colours, with all the intermediate grades.

ANOTHER CARPET FOR THE '51 EXHIBITION.—Having noticed Mrs. Percell's proposition for a carpet to be worked by ladies of England for the International Exhibition, we have been asked to mention another which is in progress for the same purpose, under the patronage (as it is called) of the Lady Mayoress. It was designed by Mr. J. W. Papworth, and the patterns were made by Mr. W. H. Simpson. It is to be 30 feet long, 20 feet wide, and to consist of 150 squares. We happen to know the work of half the fair damsels who have taken upon themselves the responsibility of the squares already appropriated, and have not the least doubt that the carpet will be as correct as their lives, as strong as their good intentions, and as varied as their accomplishments. Of the time that is wasted over Berlin wool it would be ungenerous to speak just now, when it is about to be applied to a special purpose, but there are some to whom a little advice on this subject might be useful. There is something else to be done in this world besides counting "two to the right and four to the left." We must wind up, however, or it will be said we are wool-gathering.

SLATE-DRESSING APPARATUS.—A patent has been taken out by Mr. Nathaniel Mathews, of Wern, Tremadoc, Carnarvon, quarry proprietor, for an apparatus for cutting or dressing slates into various shapes and sizes. This machine may be employed to cut fancy slates, by having cutters of the required form, and when actuated otherwise than by hand labour, an eccentric and fast and loose pulley may be used to actuate the cutter.—*Mechanics' Magazine.*

DR. ARNOTT'S PUMP FOR VENTILATION.—We examined, the other day, at Mr. Bailey's, Holborn, a pump, on a novel construction, which has just been completed, for forcing pure air into the new County Hospital at York, but are compelled, by want of space, to postpone a notice of it. Dr. Arnett assisted to explain it, and Sir Thomas Deane, Dr. Ure, Mr. Donaldson, Mr. Fowler, Mr. Laxton, and various other gentlemen interested in the question, were present.

ARCHITECTURE AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.—The lectures on architecture and construction at University College, for the ensuing session, will commence on Tuesday, the 15th inst. Professor Donaldson sets forth the following as the results sought to be produced by them:—"A systematic comprehension of the subject; a methodical mode of thinking and reasoning on the various matters considered; an interest in each branch of the science and art by illustrating precept by example, the laws by their application; a review of the history and styles of art, and of the best monuments of every period; an acquaintance with the

eminent architects of each epoch, and with their works; a general perception of the laws of taste; a knowledge of the principles of construction; a practical view of the varieties and properties of materials and their peculiar and most economical application; and an examination and comparison of the mechanical contrivances available in construction."

FOREIGN TILES.—Some remarkably large importations of roofing tiles and bricks are taking place at the present time from Antwerp, the manufacture of Belgium. One vessel, the *Active*, from Antwerp, has brought 27,612 roofing tiles, and 6,000 bricks; another, also from Antwerp, has brought 27,000 roofing tiles, 4,000 paving tiles, and 3,000 bricks.

FIRST USE OF PAPER HANGINGS.—It was on the walls of this drawing-room, the king's at Kensington-palace, that the then new art of paper-hangings, in imitation of the old velvet flock, was displayed with an effect that soon led to the adoption of so cheap and elegant a manufacture in preference to the original material from which it was copied.—*Notes and Queries.*

SURVEYORSHIP, ST. JAMES'S, CLERKENWELL.—This office (which comprises the surveillance of Pentonville, &c.) becoming vacant, seventeen candidates came forward. Six were selected, viz. Messrs. Finlay, W. P. Griffith, W. Lovell (district surveyor of Stoke Newington), Arthur Taylor, Josiah Houle, and W. F. East. After a poll the numbers were announced to be as follow:—W. Lovell, 13; W. P. Griffith, 10; W. F. East, 9.

SURVEYOR TO THE BOROUGH OF BOLTON, UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT.—There have been about thirty applicants for the office, out of whom, in the first instance, a selection was made of six. Eventually Mr. John Smith, of Altrincham, architect and surveyor, was appointed.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES.—I am glad to find that a correspondent has again revived in your pages the necessity of increasing the number of public conveniences. It is true, Mr. Editor, you can claim the merit of from time to time noticing the want; but I cannot help thinking that the public have a right to claim your constant advocacy to remedy the evil. The subject is alone suited to a professional paper, and from the reputation of *THE BUILDER*, the public hope to receive from such a source a plan whereby, not only in point of number, they may be made fully sufficient even for the visitors of the year '51; but also some plan by which the existing places may be made wholesome and not be allowed to emit poisonous evaporations that render the contiguity of a urinal a loss of 25 per cent. to the owner of the adjoining property. Decency and comfort require that this subject should not be left to private individuals to erect any sort of York-stone or cement contrivance, but rather that the different paving-boards or parish authorities be compelled to erect a sufficient number, and keep them in proper repair.—B.

* We have several plans before us, but have not determined on publishing them.

PHOTOGRAPHIC IMPROVEMENT.—The *Boston Transcript* states, that a Mr. Howes of that city has discovered a means by which a miniature-sized daguerrotype may be magnified to life size, or larger, if necessary, and reflected upon a canvass, or any flat prepared surface, so that an artist may seat himself before it and paint it as it appears.

TO RENDER STONE IMPERVIOUS TO WET.—The recipe adopted by Mr. Sylvester was used some years ago on one of the public buildings in Oxford. The architect can probably speak as to its success. I believe the process may be much simplified by using soft soap, which dissolves in cold water: the quantity depends on the texture of the stone: the saturation of alum may be used as soon as the soap water has dried off, and should produce a coat impervious to cold or hot water.—X.

TENDERS

For Six Fourth-rate Houses and an intended Public House in the Fairfield-road, Bow. The quantities supplied. Mr. Wm. Dobson, Architect.

Turval	21,940
Messrs. Curtis	2,844
Hill	2,774
Crook	2,607
Hall	2,499
Elliston	2,450
Smith	2,138
Perry	2,087